THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

By Karen Boettcher-Tate

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The Emperor's New Clothes
by Karen Boettcher-Tate

Cast of Characters
(In Order of Appearance)

AARON THE MINSTREL
general manager for the Emperor
and narrator of the play.

EMPEROR PLUMPTOE
vain, egocentric hypochondriac,
and clothesoholic.

DR. SMITH
dr. jones
dr. drivtonsiLS
these doctors look as if they
belong on the lid of a cigar box.
They probably have accents, but
as to what those accents are is
anybody's guess. May be male
or female.

JEREMY
serving boy and general go-fer.
Very shy. In love with Trudy.

TRUDY
maid. Also very shy. She only
has eyes for Jeremy.

POOKIE
Emperor's daughters. Loud, silly
and obnoxious.

KOOTCHIE

SNOOKIE

EMpress PLUMPTOE

a bit of a ding-bat.

SGT. NEENER
Sgt. in the Glump Army.

MISS PENELOPE METHOD
Superintendent of school.

CORDELIA GLEEDRIVAL
representative of B.A.R.F. She
simply oozes sweetness and light.

MR. WART
swindlers extraordinaire.

MR. HOG

VERY OLD MAN (or woman)

SMALL BOY

MOTHER

TOWNSPEOPLE

as desired
The Emperor's New Clothes

Scene One

Time: A long time ago, or right now, or sometime in the future.
Place: The Kingdom of Glump, Township of Glump, located near the Oozetingle forest.
At Rise: The curtains are closed, the apron bare. Music under.

MINSTREL ENTERS from DOWN STAGE RIGHT and strolls STAGE RIGHT, ending RIGHT of CENTER.

MINSTREL: (To audience.) Welcome! Welcome! I'm Aaron the Minstrel, and I have a tale to tell you. Now, some of you might think this story is a little far fetched, but believe me, it is TOTALY true... pretty much. I should know because I was there! (MINSTREL gives a flourish and the curtain opens. He crosses a bit RIGHT and indicates the scene. It is the public room in the palace. There is a platform UP STAGE CENTER, and upon that is a throne. A bench is placed DOWN STAGE LEFT. Three 3-fold screens, painted to depict an interior are also on the set. One is located UP STAGE LEFT, one UP STAGE RIGHT, and the third is on the platform behind the throne. EMPEROR HORACE PLUMPTOE sits, or rather slumps, on the throne. He has a bandage around his jaw which extends up and over his crown. DR. SMITH, DR. JONES and DR. DRIVONSILS hover about the EMPEROR, taking his pulse, his temperature, hitting his knee with hammers, etc. The EMPEROR is dressed in an outlandishly ornate costume, sporting vivid colors that were never meant to be worn together. During the MINSTREL narration, the action is mimed.) Emperor Plumptoe was the ruler of the Kingdom of Glump. Now, the Emperor, in the beginning, had been a very fine governor. But lately... well, to put it plainly, he was letting everything go to pot! All he cared about were personal things - his gold, his jewelry, his health, and most of all, his clothes. He was a clothes horse, a clothes demon, a clothes maniac! He had 300 closets, all of them full of the latest and most hideous fashions known to man. (MINSTREL moves into the scene.) Emperor Plumptoe, it's time for the public audience.

EMPEROR: (Whining.) I don't want to. I'm busy. I feel rotten. I'm down in the dumps. I'm tired. (The DOCS hover over EMPEROR, "tut-tutting" and "my-myings." These are three very ODD DOCS.)

DR. SMITH: Ach! I detect a little flutter of the crevulating cavity.

DOCS: Ooookool
EMPEROR: Is that bad?
DR. JONES: We don't know.
EMPEROR: Well, find out!
DR. DRIVTONSILS: It might be a malahippo-itis, complete with 
zigging of the consternation.
DOCS: Oooool
EMPEROR: I KNEW it! I knew I had something horrible. This is 
terrific! Don't just stand there flapping, do something! Pamper 
me. Soothe me!
DR. SMITH: There is no cure for Malahippo-itis if it's got zigging.
EMPEROR: No cure? I'm doomed?
MINSTREL: Your Majesty, perhaps we could take your mind off this 
for a bit. It might make you feel better. We really have a lot of 
business to attend to and... 
EMPEROR: No! Nothing will help! I am DOOMED!
DR. SMITH: We must consult Dr. Jones, Dr. Drivtonsils!
DRS. JONES/DRIVTONSILS: Dr. Smith! (DOCS bow to one another, 
step "Groucho" style STAGE LEFT and go into a huddle. We 
hear a buzzing of voices and EMPEROR looks very uneasy. 
DOCS shout "Break", a la football players, and then cross once 
more to the throne.)
DR. SMITH: We have come to the conclusion. ...
DR. JONES: That you are. ...
DR. DRIVTONSILS: Suffering from. ...
DR. SMITH: A rare case of. ... 
EMPEROR: Oh? Off! COME ON!
DOCS: CUPPACHINA RARIS!
EMPEROR: Oh, NO!
MINSTREL: (Distastefully.) Oooool
DR. DRIVTONSILS: It ISN'T fatal.
EMPEROR: (Happily.) Really?
DR. SMITH: Really. But you must rest... 
DR. JONES: Take aspirin. ... 
DR. DRIVTONSILS: And drink. ...
DOCS: Plenty of liquids.
EMPEROR: (Very gleeful.) Oool Neato-skeletal! And will I get to have 
cinnamon toast in bed and have people wait on me hand and 
foot?
DOCS: Of course!
EMPEROR: Whooppeel Oh, thank you, Doctors! You've made my 
day. Now, go home! (DOCS EXIT, in a line, STAGE RIGHT.) 
Where's Jeremy? I want Jeremy!
MINSTREL: (Crosses STAGE LEFT, calls off.) Jeremy the serving boy, the Emperor calls you. (JEREMY, a tattered serving boy ENTERS from STAGE LEFT. He is a good looking lad, eager, but a bit confused at times. He is out of breath from running and screams to a halt in front of the throne, then bows.)

EMPEROR: You must wait on me hand and foot. Doctors orders. I have a bad case of... of...

MINSTREL: Cuppachino rariss. (JEREMY makes a face.)

EMPEROR: Correct! Now, here’s a list of the things I need.
(EMPEROR quickly writes down a list and hands it to JEREMY. As he does so, MINSTREL crosses slightly DOWN STAGE and speaks to audience.)

MINSTREL: Now, we all know very well that the Emperor wasn’t sick at all. All he wanted was attention. He spent tons of money for doctors and pills. And believe me, those doctors had to keep on their toes to come up with weird and wonderful diseases to keep him happy. But for all that he spent on medical quacks, he spent one hundred times as much for the clothes on his back. As to the KIND of clothes he bought? Well, let’s just say that the Emperor’s taste was all in his mouth. (MINSTREL crosses UP STAGE a bit.)

EMPEROR: (To JEREMY.) Now GO! And hurry up about it. (JEREMY EXITS as fast as possible STAGE RIGHT.)

EMPEROR: (Pouting.) Cheer me up, Minstrel.

MINSTREL: It’s time to meet with the townspeople. That will help.

EMPEROR: Pooh! That doesn’t cheer me up. That’s... that’s... work. CHEER ME UP!

MINSTREL: But... the people are waiting!

EMPEROR: I don’t care. Besides, I can’t see anyone if I feel badly.
(He moans.) Oh! I think I’m getting worse. I’m going... I’m not long for this world. This is it... (Moan.) goodbye... I’m going.

MINSTREL: (Crossing to throne quickly.) The new shipment of clothes has arrived.

EMPEROR: (Bouncing up and down, clapping his hands.) Oh, whoopee! Rah, hurrah! I’m cheered up. Yippee!

MINSTREL: (Calling OFF STAGE LEFT.) Miss Trudy, bring in the new clothes! (TRUDY ENTERS from STAGE LEFT with a rack of clothes. She is a pretty little thing, but shy and wide-eyed. At the same time, JEREMY races in from STAGE RIGHT with a large sack of pills, bottles, boxes, etc. They stop and stare at each other, then blush and look away. EMPEROR jumps up and crosses between them just as JEREMY starts to take TRUDY’S
hand. They are thrown apart. JEREMY drops the sack, and the items go flying. He gathers them up, all the time stealing looks at TRUDY.)

EMPEROR: New clothes! New clothes for the Emperor! Whooppeel (We hear sounds OFF STAGE LEFT. Suddenly the Royal Family erupts onto the stage. The EMPEROR's three daughters, SNOOKIE, POOKIE and KOOTCHIE are repulsive looking creatures, dressed in clothes that would gag a goat. They are followed by the EMPRESS, a large, imposing, ding-bat of a woman, dressed as badly as her daughters. The women chatter incessantly. They surround the rack and immediately start trying clothes on. EMPEROR crossing to rack.) Tremendous! I'll have a relapse later!

POOKIE: (Fighting over dress.) Daddy, I want the (blue) dress. Kootchie took it!

KOOTCHIE: I did not, did I Mommy? Snookie took it!

SNOOKIE: Kootchie always blames me! Pookie is the one.

EMPRESS: Girls! Girls! Snookie, Pookie, Kootchie! (Bellowing.) QUIET! (Girls are quiet.) That's my little angel-cakes!

EMPEROR: Oh, they're lovely! We must be the best dressed family in the entire universe.

MINSTREL: (Crossing to EMPEROR.) Psst... your majesty...

EMPEROR: (Putting on cape.) I must remember to have ten more closets made. Jeremy, make a note of that. (JEREMY takes out pad and paper and writes it down. During this sequence, TRUDY has been helping the girls change into the new clothes - either behind the screen, STAGE LEFT, or over the top of the clothes they are already wearing. JEREMY assists the EMPEROR by holding clothes, adjusting hats, etc. JEREMY and TRUDY sneak a look at each other whenever they can.)

MINSTREL: Emperor, I beg your pardon, but...

EMPEROR: Jeremy, take care of my dry cleaning bill. Better yet, buy the dry cleaning plant and move it next door to the castle.

MINSTREL: Sir, the time. You've got to...

EMPEROR: What's the bill for today's shipment of clothes? (JEREMY hands him the bill, EMPEROR reads.) Seven thousand six hundred and thirteen dollars. Very reasonable. Raise the taxes!

MINSTREL: EMPEROR!

EMPEROR: What is it, Minstrel? Can't you see I have important stuff to do?

MINSTREL: It's time for the public audience.

EMPEROR: (Pouting.) Not now. I don't want to.

MINSTREL: Your Highness, we must. People are waiting.
EMPEROR: (Trying to ignore MINSTREL.) Let me see my lovely little daughters. Come on. How do you look? (DAUGHTERS come forward, model new clothes.) Tremendous! Fantastical!

MINSTREL: (Exasperated.) EMPEROR! It’s the LAW!

EMPEROR: (Very annoyed.) Okay! Okay! Let’s get it over with! But, don’t blame me if I get sick and keel over. It will be on your head! (TRUDY and JEREMY start to cross towards one another. The EMPEROR steps between them.) Remove the clothes to my dressing room. Hurry it up. (TRUDY backs out STAGE LEFT with clothes rack, also carries any clothes that didn’t get put back on the rack.) I feel faint! (EMPEROR staggers a bit, then starts to fall. JEREMY races to his side to catch him. EMPEROR leans on JEREMY and JEREMY is forced to his knees by the weight. MINSTREL crosses STAGE RIGHT to announce people. JEREMY helps EMPEROR to throne, then collapses onto floor UP STAGE RIGHT. GIRLS sit on STAGE LEFT bench; their mother stands behind them.)

POOKIE: I HATE and LOATHE this.

SNOOKIE: It’s so BORING!

KOOTCHIE: The townspeople are YUCKY!

EMPRESS: Well, my little cutie-ooties, just think of it as a chance to show off your new clothey-whoasies. (KOOTCHIE screams. JEREMY revives with a start. Everyone on stage jumps up in unison.)

KOOTCHIE: Oh, no!

EMPRESS: What is it?

KOOTCHIE: I’ve snagged my fingernail! (The women gasp.)

EMPRESS: TRUDY! TRUDY! Come here, at once. (TRUDY races IN from STAGE LEFT. At the same time, JEREMY starts cross to STAGE LEFT and nearly collides with TRUDY. They smile foolishly at one another.)

KOOTCHIE: (Gasping.) A nail file! Quickly! (JEREMY and TRUDY continue to gaze at one another.)

EMPEROR: (Roaring.) AT ONCE! (JEREMY returns to his position STAGE RIGHT of throne. TRUDY reaches into her voluminous pocket and produces a nail file. The women cluck over poor KOOTCHIE’s fingernail. TRUDY begins to file nail. JEREMY stares at her.)

MINSTREL: Announcing Sgt. Neener of the Glump Army! (SGT. NEENER ENTERS from STAGE RIGHT. He crosses DOWN STAGE and RIGHT of throne, bows.)
GIRLS: (Distastefully.) Oooo. (NEENER is dressed in a uniform that has definitely seen better days. Even the plume on his hat looks like it is molting. He gives a smart salute.)

NEENER: Sgt. Neener, reporting Sire.
EMPEROR: Make it snappy, Neener.
POOKIE: He’s sooooo stupid.
SNOOKIE: Look at his UNIFORM. It stinks.
KOOTCHIE: I wouldn’t be caught DEAD in a crummy old thing like that.

POOKIE: And, he’s weird, too!
GIRLS: (As in a horror movie.) Neener, neener, neener, neener... (NEENER is growing more uncomfortable by the minute.)

EMPEROR: Well, can’t you talk?
NEENER: Sire, I... .
EMPEROR: Out with it!
NEENER: The Army, your Emperorship... I’ve been elected to approach you about funding.

EMPEROR: MONEY? You need MONEY? I NEED MY MONEY! Why should I give you any more?
NEENER: Well, to begin with, our uniforms are falling apart.
KOOTCHIE: You said it, Buster. (To TRUDY.) Ouch! You little rat. Be careful!

EMPEROR: So, what am I supposed to do about it?
NEENER: Sire, we don’t have the money to buy new ones.
EMPEROR: So, get some.
NEENER: But, but... .

EMPEROR: OW! My neck hurts. Jeremy! (JEREMY races behind throne and massages EMPEROR’s neck. EMPRESS moves to stand STAGE LEFT of the throne, takes his hand and pats it.)

EMPRESS: Oh, my poor little snookie-wookie.

EMPEROR: (Pouting like a baby.) This public audience bit is hard work. Owl Stop it, Jeremy. (JEREMY stops and steps down from platform, STAGE RIGHT side.) You don’t need NEW uniforms. In fact, I have been thinking about disbanding the entire army.

MINSTREL: Your Majesty!

EMPEROR: Have any wars lately?
NEENER: No, but last year we used the army to fight an infestation of piranha-crocs in the moat!

GIRLS: Ooooo, gross!

EMPEROR: I say... let them eat cake!
NEENER: Huh?

EMPEROR: Money refused!
NEENER: But, your Goodness... we...
EMPEROR: All done. All finished. All over. Scram! (NEENER EXITS, crestfallen, STAGE RIGHT.)

SNOOKIE: I guess you told him, Daddy.

POOKIE: Minstrel, go get me a banana split.

MINSTREL: I'm sorry, Miss Pookie, but I...

POOKIE: (Screeching.) Don't you ever call me that again! I am an EMPRESSETTE! Got that? And so are my sisters!

KOOTCHIE/SNOOKIE: YEAH!

EMPERESS: Oh dear, my hair is slightly mussed! Trudy! (TRUDY crosses to EMPRESS and fixes her hair.)

POOKIE: I'm waiting, minstrell

MINSTREL: I'm sorry, EMPRESSETTE, but my duty is to announce the...

POOKIE: Daddy!

EMPEROR: I hate to admit it, but he's right. He has to announce the townspeople.

GIRLS: Daaaaady!

EMPEROR: I'll get you all TWO banana splits after this is over. Hurry it up Minstrel. Next?

MINSTREL: Superintendent of Schools, Miss Penelope Method!

(METHOD ENTERS from STAGE RIGHT. Her clothes are shabby and she wears thick glasses that have been taped to hold them together. She is quite nervous.)

MISS METHOD: (Bowing.) Your Majesty.

EMPEROR: What?

MISS METHOD: What?

EMPEROR: (Shouting.) WHAT?!

MINSTREL: (Hissing.) State your business, Miss Method.

MISS METHOD: Oh! I... uh... what I mean to say is... 

EMPEROR: Oh, ye gods and little fishes. Spit it out!

MISS METHOD: Well, sir... we... uh... (She delivers the following in a very rapid manner, hardly stopping to take a breath.) Due to the inability to procure monetary measures, the educational system is plummeting to depths whereby they will be unable to impart basic nuggets of universal knowledge.

ALL: Huh?

MISS METHOD: We don't have any textbooks and we're out of chalk.

EMPEROR: So?

MISS METHOD: We can't have school if we don't have...

EMPEROR: Nonsense! My little girls have never been to school and look at them. (GIRLS stand and curtsy and giggle. EMPRESS crosses to them and clucks over them.)
EMPEROR: So? Let the parents worry about it. Close the schools!
MISS METHOD: No! If you close the schools nobody will know how
to read or write or ANYTHING. They'll be illiterate boobies.

MISS METHOD: (Not giving up. She grabs TRUDY and JEREMY. They
are almost nose to nose and absolutely hypnotized by one
another.) Tell them how much school meant to you. (They don't
hear him.) TELL THEM! (Near tears.) Oh, no! This is how
everybody will turn out if we close the schools. (She flings them
apart.) Oh, destruction, oh, catastrophe!

EMPEROR: I need all my money for my clothes and my toys and my
doctors so it's no use over-acting like that. (MISS METHOD
EXITS STAGE RIGHT.)

MISS METHOD: (Muttering, on the way out.) You'll be sorry for this.
You'll see.

EMPEROR: Great! I've got an idea. Jeremy! (TRUDY and JEREMY
still gaze at each other.) JEREMY! (JEREMY jumps, races to
STAGE RIGHT side of throne. TRUDY crosses DOWN STAGE to
GIRLS.)

SNOOKIE: Trudy's got a boyfriend. Nyah, nyah, nyah.
KOOTchie: It just makes me want to. . . (She makes "throw-up"
motion, finger stuck down throat.)

POOKIE: Kissey, kissey, blatt! (TRUDY and JEREMY are very
embarrassed by this.)

EMPEROR: (To JEREMY.) Keep your mind on your work. You can be
replaced, you know. Now. . . my idea. . . let's turn the school
into a giant clothes-making plant. Spare no expense. (JEREMY
writes all this down.) I want the best designers in the world.
Whoopiee, that cheers me up!

EMPRESS/GIRLS: Hurrah!

EMPEROR: (To MINSTREL.) That does it. Let's go eat!
MINSTREL: There is one more waiting, sire. (ALL groan.)

MINSTREL: Cordelia Gleedrival! Representative from B.A.R.F.
ALL: BARF?

MINSTREL: It stands for Better Action Regarding Funding.
(CORDELIA ENTERS. She is dressed all in pink and is fluttery
and eager. She is probably one of the sweetest people in the
entire world. In fact, she is so sweet that it makes a body
woozy.)
CORDELIA: (Bowing, with a flourish.) Oh, my wonderful Emperor! How I have waited for this fantastic day. You look so wonderful. And your sweet and fine little family also. It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood, and isn't this just special and I hope you're having a happy day.

EMPEROR: Make it snappy, lady. I have stuff to do.

CORDELIA: Well, we down at BARF...

ALL: Barf?

CORDELIA: Are aware that our lives, though rich in promise, have fallen on hard times. We know that you love us all, as we love you... for life is a banquet and everybody loves a lover and that's why I love you. So, with that thought in mind, we at BARF...

ALL: Barf?

CORDELIA: Wish to ask that, because you are so special, and the whole world is your oyster, please share this loving cup of kindness so that our cup runneth over and we shall reach out and touch someone.

EMPEROR: What in billy blue blazes are you talking about?

CORDELIA: Our coffers are empty, but isn't it a grand night for singing? Our hearts are full.

EMPEROR: Lady!

MINSTREL: (To EMPEROR.) I think I can translate...

EMPEROR: Hurry it up.

MINSTREL: She says the kingdom is starving and they need help.

EMPEROR: Lady...

CORDELIA: Just call me Cordelia.

EMPEROR: Lady... how did you get this job?

CORDELIA: Oh, I don't mean to toot my own horn... I am very humble and modest, but I believe it is because I embrace the very core of life and because I am so sweet and wonderful and kind and caring.

EMPEROR: The answer is NO!

CORDELIA: Say what?

EMPEROR: No! I NEED all my money. You and your cohorts don't get it.

CORDELIA: Oh! I am sorry to hear that. It grieves my heart. It saddens me deeply. But, it's a lovely day, and when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. Today is the first day of the rest of your life. Lucy, I'm home. Be happy, don't worry! (She EXITS happily OUT STAGE RIGHT.)

EMPEROR: Anyone else?
MINSTREL: That's it for today, Emperor. (GIRLS and EMPRESS race to throne and begin to pull EMPEROR to his feet.)

KOOTCHIE: Come on, Daddy. You said we could have some ice cream.

SNOOKIE: I want pizzal

POOKIE: I want a banana split and I want some twinkies and some soda pop and some other junk, too, and then I want to have a parade so I can show off my new clothes.

EMPRESS: I'd like some spaghetti and meatballs and a French dip sandwich.

EMPEROR: French dip sandwich? I've got it!

WOMEN: What?

EMPEROR: Jeremy!!! Fill the hot air balloon. We're going to go to Paris for lunch.

WOMEN: Yeah! Hurrah!

EMPRESS: Trudy! Come with us. We must change our clothes. (WOMEN EXIT out STAGE LEFT. EMPEROR EXITS STAGE RIGHT.)

EMPEROR: I'll get our passports. (JEREMY and TRUDY are left on stage. They start to move toward one another. Before they can meet, they are called OFF STAGE.)

EMPEROR: (OFF STAGE.) JEREMY!

EMPRESS: (OFF STAGE.) TRUDY! (JEREMY and TRUDY gaze at each other, blush. JEREMY begins to back up toward throne where he has left the sack of drugstore items. He reaches behind him, fumbles for the sack, picks it up. As he does so, he loses his balance and trips forward. JEREMY and the items go flying as he sprawls CENTER. TRUDY utters a little scream and races to his side.)

TRUDY: (Very alarmed.) Are you all right?

JEREMY: (Grinning foolishly.) Huh? (They scramble around on hands and knees, picking up items. Finally bump heads CENTER.)

TRUDY/JEREMY: I'm sorry!

EMPEROR: (OFF STAGE.) JEREMY!

EMPRESS: (OFF STAGE.) TRUDY!

TRUDY: Oh, dear! I have to go.

JEREMY: (Catching her hand - violins and lacy hearts!) Don't go!

TRUDY: But... .

JEREMY: (Exasperated, standing, picking up last of articles.) I'm TIRED of waiting on them hand and foot!

TRUDY: Jeremy!!

JEREMY: I know, I know! But, it didn't used to be like this. We used to have TIME to relax and have fun. Now, all we do is fetch and carry. What happened?
TRUDY: (Sighing, getting to her feet.) I don't know. When I first came here, working for the Empress was fun! Now she doesn't even listen to me.

JEREMY: Now she doesn't even let you TALK! And the kingdom... it used to be a great place... now, everything has gone to pot!

TRUDY: (Alarmed, looking around.) Shhh! Don't let them hear you!

JEREMY: (Suddenly even more aware of TRUDY.) Trudy?

TRUDY: "Aha, at last", thinks she! Yes? (They step towards one another.)

JEREMY: I've been waiting to ask you... TRUDY: Yes?

JEREMY: Would you... I mean... do you... I mean...

TRUDY: Yes?

EMPEROR: (OFF STAGE.) Jeremy, you little twerp, hurry up!

GIRLS: (OFF STAGE.) Tr-r-r-u-u-d-y! NOW! (JEREMY and TRUDY look OFF STAGE RIGHT and STAGE LEFT, then look sadly at one another. They EXIT. MINSTREL crosses DOWN STAGE of curtain line to audience. The curtain closes. If there is no curtain, the lights go to half and the set changes can take place as the MINSTREL speaks, by those people playing the townspeople.)

MINSTREL: The days passed, and the Emperor, when he was not being doctored and waited on and spoiled, tried on his new clothes, and ordered more and more. Each outfit was more outrageous than the last. And then, one day, something very strange and unusual happened.

Scene Two

Time: A few days later.

Place: The town square. The three-fold screens have been reversed to depict an exterior. The screen behind the throne has been moved DOWN STAGE to mask the throne. The bench has been moved from STAGE LEFT to STAGE RIGHT. Foliage and banners may be added if desired.

At Rise: The stage is empty, save for the scenery. MINSTREL EXITS STAGE RIGHT. MR. WART and MR. HOG ENTER from STAGE LEFT pushing a large wagon. It is a garish medicine show cart, with brightly colored banners and signs, and covered with mysterious items dangling from the frame. One large sign declares, "POTIONS AND NOTIONS, TRAVELING MEDICINE SHOW". WART and HOG are quite colorful themselves. They wear very bright suits, and bowler hats... true "pitch men". They place the cart UP STAGE CENTER.

WART: This is it, Mr. Hog. This is it! I have a feeling about this place.

End of Script Sample
PRODUCTION NOTES

Set: A platform is situated UP STAGE CENTER, upon which is the Emperor's throne. Three 3-fold screens, painted to suggest an interior, are also in the opening scene. One is situated UP STAGE LEFT, one UP STAGE RIGHT, and one is on the platform behind the throne. When the scene shifts to the courtyard, the 3-folds are turned to the reverse side which will suggest an exterior. One screen is moved DOWN STAGE, in front of the throne, to mask it. If screens are unavailable, several refrigerator cartons may be used. One side is painted to depict the interior, another the exterior. These are simply rotated at the scene change.

Banners, plants, etc. may also be used to dress the stage.

Potions and Notions Cart: This should be large enough to conceal a trunk, two sets of barbells, bottles and a lot of very WEIRD looking items, the wilder the better. A shopping cart or audio visual cart could provide the base. A lightweight frame is then placed over the cart. Ideally, the wagon should have uprights and a canopy of some kind.

Barbells: These are easily made with broomsticks and papier mache, painted black. They should be identical, or, use the same barbell twice, pretending to make the "switch" behind the curtain.

Magic Effects: [ROSE:] Collapsing flowers are readily available at magic stores and produce an excellent effect. If the commercial product is not used, WART could produce a single rose. He has the rose tucked up his sleeve and a wild flourish conceals his removing it.

[SILKS:] Squares of lightweight fabric such as nylon are tied together. A flat pouch is sewn on the underside of the garment from which the silks will be removed. The silks are placed in the pouch with one end of the string of silks protruding slightly at the collar. WART then waves his arms over the person, takes hold of the silk FROM THE UPSTAGE SIDE and begins to pull it out slowly, stretching it across the stage.

[SNOW:] Confetti may be used, but a better effect comes from styrofoam packing pellets. A piece of canvas is suspended between two batons from the flies, out of sight of the audience. One baton is secure, the other is held in place by a rope. The "snow" is placed on the canvas. At the signal, the
rope is pulled and the canvas tips, releasing the "snow". It is advisable to have the trick placed as far upstage as possible.

PROPERTIES

Scene One: Doctor's equipment - stethoscope, hammer, thermometer, etc.
Writing pad and pencil (TWO) for EMPEROR and JEREMY
Paper sack of drug store items
Rack of clothes
Bill for clothes
Nailfile

Scene Two: Potions and notion cart
Bottles
Two sets of barbells
One empty trunk
License

Scene Three: Turkey leg
Cape
Trunk

COSTUMES

Anything goes! Since this story takes place in any period of history, the costuming can be as wild as you wish.

EMPEROR and HIS FAMILY: These people have absolutely NO sense of style or color. Their outfits should reflect their lack of taste. The costumes should vary in each scene. Over-dressing (wearing layers of costumes) might be a solution to the changes. By removing one portion of the costume, another look can be achieved. For the "underwear" scene, the EMPEROR dresses down to a suit of baggy long-johns. The GIRLS could wear long-johns also, or garish bloomers and ruffled undershirts.

AARON the MINSTREL: Bloused shirt, slacks
DOCTORS: Suits or black robes
JEREMY: Tattered shirt and pants
TRUDY: Tattered peasant blouse, skirt, apron
SGT. NEENER: A military costume, tattered and torn
PALMER METHOD: Suit, bow tie
CORDELIA GLEEDRIVAL: A fluffy cloud of pink
WART and HOG: Loud, colorful "pitchmen" suits
TOWNSPEOPLE: Peasant-type costumes
We hope you’ve enjoyed this script sample.

We encourage you to read the entire script before making your final decision.

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